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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: JAN 2002



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(b)(3)
(t)

THE CRISIS
USSR/CUBA

Information as of 0600

29 October 1962

PREPARED FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
FURTHER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION
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29 October 1962

SC No. 11087/62

SUMMARY CONTENTS

I. Castro, faced with a serious setback to his prestige, is evidently attempting to pressure the Soviet Union into supporting his demands for major US concessions prior to the implementation of the Soviet pledge to remove the offensive military equipment from Cuba. Surveillance on 27 October (the most recent) indicates that construction and camouflage activity were continuing at the MRBM and IRBM sites in Cuba.

II. Eight Soviet ships--four tankers and four dry cargo ships--are presently en route to Cuba. One of the tankers, the GROZNY, is just inside the quarantine zone--apparently dead in the water or proceeding at an extremely slow speed.

III. Moscow this morning published the text of the President's reply to Khrushchev's announcement on the withdrawal of Soviet missiles. The bloc public is being told that Khrushchev has earned "personal credit" for his stroke for peace. The emphasis being given throughout the bloc to a US pledge not to invade Cuba reflects Moscow's urge to salvage prestige within its sphere. Peiping, however, is backing Castro's demands for further US concessions, and is evidently sticking to its aim of making Moscow look bad.

No significant changes have been observed in the disposition of major Soviet or Satellite military forces.

IV. Four installations of the US-owned Creole Corporation in the Venezuelan oil fields were sabotaged yesterday morning.

Further attempts at sabotage elsewhere in Latin America can be expected.

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U Thant, who intends to depart for Cuba on Tuesday with between six and ten neutral military officers, has asked for an indication from the President of what "assurances" the US is prepared to offer Cuba.

Little reaction has come in yet from Latin America on Khrushchev's dismantling announcement. Elsewhere in the free world the news is being greeted with jubilation, relief, and an occasional note of caution. The British Foreign Office has expressed official pleasure. The press in Western Europe is using such phrases as "unbelievably happy" and "enormously satisfying." The French are showing cautious optimism. In West Germany a note of apprehension about Berlin is still being sounded, but in West Berlin itself there are some signs of quiet relief.

Canada's Lester Pearson is quoted as saying that if the settlement can lead to progress on disarmament, "then we can be even more grateful to President Kennedy for his firm stand."

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I. The Situation in Cuba

Castro, faced with a serious setback to his prestige, is evidently attempting to pressure the Soviet Union into supporting his demands for major US concessions prior to the implementation of the Soviet pledge to remove the offensive military equipment from Cuba.

Castro's 28 October statement, issued shortly after publication of Khrushchev's letter of the same day to President Kennedy, listed five conditions which he said the US must meet before "guarantees against US aggression" can exist. These conditions are: (1) cessation of all commercial and economic pressure against Cuba; (2) an end to all "subversive activities" carried out against the Castro regime from the territory of the US and other "accomplice countries;" (3) cessation of "pirate attacks" on Cuba; (4) an end to violations of our air and naval space" by US aircraft and ships; (5) evacuation of the US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay.

Except for the reference in the body of Castro's statement, there has been no mention in domestic Cuban media of Khrushchev's 28 October letter to President Kennedy. Castro's statement, on the other hand, has been given heavy coverage. Special editions of Havana's two leading newspapers, including the Communist Hoy, were issued to cover Castro's statement, which was also given heavy play by Cuban radio stations, and in a speech later in the day by Raul Castro.

Raul ridiculed the idea that the US could be trusted to abide by any "non-aggression guarantee" unless Fidel's terms are met. He concluded: "Whatever happened, whatever President Kennedy says, Cuba will remain mobilized until its commander in chief orders the contrary." In this speech, Raul Castro also spelled out his brother's reference to the US Naval Base in terms which suggest that no immediate Cuban action is envisaged. He said: "Sooner or later, this (evacuation of the Base by the US) has to happen--and it has to happen, we reiterate once more, through peaceful means."

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Cuban military preparations continued during 28 October and Cuban radio stations carried extensive instructions for civil defense.

An early reaction to the 28 October Kennedy-Khrushchev exchange from an anti-Castro individual inside Cuba is probably representative of the reaction to come from many Cubans at home and in exile who oppose the regime. An individual in Cuba, told a friend in Miami by telephone: "We are now rid of the Russians, but we have Castro still. The Cuban people are crushed."

Other Cubans reported by telephone to friends and relatives in Miami on 28 October that food shortages are beginning to be felt in Havana, that arrests of known or suspected dissidents are continuing in various parts of the country, and that the Voice of America broadcasts are getting good reaction in Havana.

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Construction and improvement activity were continuing on 27 October at the MRBM and IRBM sites in Cuba according to the last low altitude photography taken on 27 October. Camouflage, including covering with canvas and the employment of natural concealment, was also continuing at the MRBM sites [redacted]

Activity at the IRBM sites was proceeding at a high rate. The number of vehicles noted at Guanajay site 1 increased from at least 44 on 26 October to at least 61 on 27 October. Additional missile support equipment had also been moved to this site. At site 2 a significant amount of construction was completed between 26 and 27 October. Work was also continuing at the Remedios IRBM site on 27 October.

The photography of 27 October also provides additional evidence that all MRBM and IRBM sites were intended to have nuclear warhead bunkers.

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II. SOVIET SHIPPING TO CUBA

Eight Soviet ships--four tankers and four dry cargo ships--are presently en route to Cuba. One of the tankers, GROZNY, is just inside the quarantine zone--apparently held in the water or proceeding at an extremely slow speed. Of the dry cargo ships, the BELOVODSK, is about a day away from entering the zone. In addition to the Soviet ships, one Czech freighter also is headed toward Cuba. Although information on the cargoes being transported by these ships is incomplete, none is believed to be carrying military equipment.

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III. THE SITUATION IN THE BLOCA. REACTION TO KHRUSHCHEV DISMANTLING ANNOUNCEMENT

Moscow has moved quickly to dramatize Khrushchev's 28 October offer to dismantle the Soviet bases in Cuba under UN supervision as a major step in guaranteeing world peace. Khrushchev's reference to US assurances against an invasion of Cuba is being highlighted in Soviet domestic propaganda in an apparent effort to convince the Soviet audience that unilateral US action was averted by the Soviet Premier's move.

Khrushchev's indication that the USSR wishes to take up negotiations with the US on broader international issues was reiterated by Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov on his arrival last night in New York. Neither Kuznetsov nor Khrushchev mentioned Berlin, suggesting that for the time being at least Moscow intends to play this issue in low key. The Soviets also avoided any suggestion of a link between Cuba and the Berlin situation in their 26 October overtures to the West Germans to use their influence toward a peaceful settlement of the Cuban crisis.

The Communist bloc's initial treatment of the US-Soviet exchange reflects the impact the Soviet backdown is bound to have on the USSR's position as leader of the bloc. East European press and radio comment attributes the Soviet decision to President Kennedy's assurances not to invade Cuba, but also reiterates Moscow's theme that Khrushchev deserves "personal credit" for preserving the peace.

In a brief dispatch, Radio Warsaw hinted at a possible settlement on other pressing international issues by stating that in this "new atmosphere" it may finally become possible to conduct negotiations on questions of great international significance. Belgrade, which was cautious in its comment earlier in the crisis, is now emphasizing the "statesmanlike" role played by Khrushchev in easing tensions.

The USSR apparently did not coordinate its move with the Castro regime. Aside from Castro's brief reference, Havana has not commented publicly on Khrushchev's message. Similarly, Moscow has only briefly reported Castro's

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statement but has not commented on his demands. While the Soviet Union has declared its willingness to withdraw its missile bases from Cuba, it has indicated it will continue to support Castro and provide economic aid to help him maintain his regime.

Immediately prior to Khrushchev's 27 October letter calling for a reciprocal Soviet-US withdrawal of offensive weapons from Cuba and Turkey, the USSR reportedly attempted to bring pressure to bear on the Turkish government to foreswear unilaterally the use of missiles.

The US Embassy in Moscow reports that there does not seem to be any restrictions on tourist or business travel within the Soviet Union. According to one unconfirmed report, measures which were taken by the USSR to limit the movement of certain foreigners at the beginning of the Cuban crisis have now been lifted.

A terse Radio Peiping newscast reported the latest Soviet move without comment. But the bulk of Chinese reporting on Cuba continues to emphasize US military preparations and repeated pledges of Chinese support for Cuba. Ten thousand Chinese were paraded in the streets of Peiping on 28 October to hear regime spokesmen reiterate these pledges. Thus far, Peiping has been the only bloc capital to broadcast the text of Castro's statement demanding evacuation of Guantanamo.

Khrushchev's Cuban retreat will be used by the Chinese in their efforts to undermine confidence in Soviet leadership of Communist world affairs. Even before the present crisis, the Chinese were implying to the Cubans that the USSR was an untrustworthy ally.

Peiping undoubtedly will portray Khrushchev's move toward a Cuban solution as weakness in the face of the "imperialist enemy." Albania, Peiping's European ally, already has reported that the Western press is regarding Khrushchev's letter as a "victory for American diplomacy."

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B. MILITARY

We have noted the following Soviet military developments; an assessment of their significance will be issued later this morning by the USIB Watch Committee.

No significant changes have been observed in the disposition of major Soviet or Satellite military forces.

Air: Flight activity by the Long Range Air Force (LRAF) appears to be somewhat higher than is usual for a weekend. However, we have noted no significant out-of-area flights.

Ten secondary East German airfields, which lie near the air corridors to Berlin and are normally unoccupied, have been used since 24 October by transport aircraft of the 24th Air Army. This may indicate that plans for the dispersal of some tactical air elements in East Germany have been implemented.

Naval: Soviet naval activity generally appears to be at a normal level.

There are probably four F-class conventional submarines operating in or near the quarantine area off Cuba. One of them about 300 miles south of Bermuda Sunday evening and was escorted during the night in an easterly direction by US destroyers.

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The combined Soviet/Satellite naval exercise in the Baltic Sea that began on 25 October continued into Sunday.

Ground: No change has been noted in the location of major Soviet or Satellite ground forces, nor are there indications of preparations to redeploy large formations.

Reports from Bulgaria indicate that some call-ups of reservists have been made. Otherwise, there was no evidence of unusual military activity in the satellites over the weekend.

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IV. NON-BLOC DEVELOPMENTS

U Thant said last evening that he intends to take between six and ten neutral military officers with him to Havana on Tuesday to begin inspection of Soviet missile and bomber sites. The officers will be supervised by Indian Brigadier Rikhye, U Thant's military adviser, who said that on arrival his men will be sent to the locations cited in US information and have them report on dismantling and removal. U Thant told US representatives at the United Nations that it would be helpful to him in his discussions with Cuban officials if the US could suspend reconnaissance flights and the shipping quarantine during his stay. He has also asked for an indication from the President of the "assurances" the US is prepared to offer Cuba.

Word on the official and public reaction in Latin America has not yet begun to come in. However, Venezuela's delegate to the UN, possibly representative of one line of thought, yesterday expressed his concern to our delegation lest the US get trapped into commitments in Cuba beyond the guarantee against "invasion."

The sabotage of four electrical substations of the US-owned Creole Corporation in the Lake Maracaibo oil fields early on 28 October probably was carried out by Venezuelan Communists acting on orders issued the day before. An unidentified but evidently Cuban-based transmitter on 27 October had instructed unknown Latin American recipients to start the destruction of "any kind of Yankee property."

Initial estimates of Creole officials were that about one sixth of Venezuela's daily production of 3 million barrels would be temporarily lost. These officials said it will be several days before it is known when production can be resumed.

Western European countries greeted the news of Khrushchev's decision to remove the missile bases with surprise, joy, relief, and some notes of caution. A British Foreign Office spokesman said the government was "pleased" by the news and by Khrushchev's agreement to accept UN inspection of the dismantling. The conservative Daily Telegraph commented that now that the USSR had accepted the "verification principle" in Cuba, "a long-barred door may have been set ajar." In a message sent to Moscow just before

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Khrushchev's move became known, Prime Minister Macmillan said that once the Cuban situation is normalized, the way would be open for wider East-West negotiations, including talks on a nuclear test ban.

The French showed cautious optimism, seeing the possibility of additional surprises. In Canada, Liberal leader Pearson remarked that if the settlement can lead to progress on disarmament, "then we can be even more grateful to President Kennedy for his firm stand."

Norwegian Prime Minister Gerhardson said "This is an almost unbelievably happy outcome of a situation that could have had the most disastrous consequences." Swedish Foreign Minister Nilson described the news as "enormously satisfying," while Bonn's All-German Affairs Minister Lemmer found it "wonderful, astounding." The opposition Frankfurter Rundschau warned, however, that Khrushchev "will certainly try to compensate for the direct retreat in Cuba with a diplomatic offensive at another place." But Berliners did not appear worried, and Mayor Brandt expressed the hope that his city "would feel something of the change which is going through the world."

The Copenhagen radio on 28 October expressed the view that the reason for Khrushchev's "capitulation" was to be found in two events of the previous night: an alleged announcement by Ambassador Stevenson to Allied ambassadors that the US would knock out the missile and bomber bases within 24 hours if work on them was not stopped forthwith; and the mobilization of US transport aircraft, "which could have no other meaning than that the US was preparing to occupy the Soviet Cuban bases."

Turkish Foreign Minister Erkin has been quoted by Agence France Presse as voicing his belief that tensions will "fade away" with the dismantling of the missile bases. Damascus radio broadcast that Premier al-Azm has sent a cable to Khrushchev praising his "brave and noble" stand. A Japanese Government statement calls the latest Kennedy-Khrushchev exchange "a matter for much rejoicing."

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